

Nation

Volume 23, No. 09 • March 4, 2016

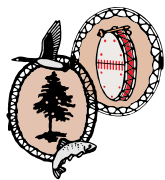
**Recovering
identity**
Artist Nadia Myre
connects with the past

Meenwach'heewouwan
Maskinnou walkers

Cree housing crisis

Tagaq of the North

\$2.50 Free in Iiyuuuschii
Serving Iiyuuuschii since 1993
Canada Post Publication No. 40015005



WORKING

TOGETHER

FOR SAFER

AND ENGAGED

COMMUNITIES

You have a project that could help make your community a better place?

Apply now

CREE JUSTICE FUNDS

YOUTH ENGAGEMENT FUND

CORRECTIONS FUND

CRIME PREVENTION FUND

Through these funds, the DOJCS (Department of Justice and Correctional Services) provides financial assistance to community members willing to implement initiatives that facilitate and improve the administration of justice for the Crees across Eeyou Istchee.

Be engaged.



Make a difference.

For details, please visit the DOJCS website at: <http://creejusticefunds.ca> or phone (418) 923-2661, ext. 1180.

An early report card

by Lyle Stewart

A common knock on the federal Liberal Party is that they campaign from the left and govern from the right. Judging from the opinion polls since Justin Trudeau's Liberals were elected to government last October, many Canadians don't yet seem to mind.

That could change, and soon.

Granted, you would be hard put to imagine a better salesman than Justin Trudeau. A gleaming smile for every selfie, a pair of twinkly eyes for the TV cameras and a patter of positivity that seems to say what everyone wants to hear. It all contrasts starkly with the gloomy, dour and angry man he replaced as prime minister.

But when it comes down to the policies that actually affect our lives, the differences between Harper and Trudeau might not amount to much. Less than six months into their mandate, there are already troubling signs that, on the issues that count, the Liberals will follow the Conservative template:

- Selling \$15 billion in weapons and tanks to Saudi Arabia, consistently one of the world's worst human rights violators? No problem, despite Liberal promises to consider human-rights records in arms deals.
- The Trans-Pacific Partnership, a multi-nation "free trade" deal with Pacific Rim nations, including China's totalitarian government, is likewise fine with the Liberals, who plan to introduce it for ratification as negotiated during the election campaign by a losing Conservative government desperate for good news. This, despite the certainty it will eliminate tens of thousands of high-paying jobs, make it easier for corporations (like mining companies) to override environmental protections, and cost all of us much more for medical prescriptions.
- Trudeau is continuing the Harperesque cheerleading for petroleum pipeline projects that pose a direct risk to many communities – especially First Nations communities – across the country. Despite his promise to First Nations of a veto over

natural-resource projects during the election, now Trudeau's mouth sounds like it's filled with marbles. Asked during a press conference with Alberta Premier Rachel Notley whether he would honour his pledge on the Energy East project, he refused to say yes or no. Instead, he repeated his nice-sounding PR phrase about how his government sees Indigenous peoples "as partners in all that happens in this land."

One lesson I've learned after years of journalism and political activism is that politics don't end once an election is over. Unless people keep up pressure on a winning party to implement its promises, it will be much less inclined to follow through when the realities of leading a government become apparent.

What we can be absolutely sure of is that the business community in Canada is spending millions lobbying the new government to water down or forget many of its campaign planks. For First Nations communities, this amounts to quite a few. And, already, as we see above, one of the most significant is being elbowed aside with a mealy-mouthed platitude that sounds good but doesn't amount to a hill of beans.

Trudeau promised many things to Canada's Indigenous peoples. Aside from the veto, there is support to protect culture and language, a \$300 million increase to First Nations education budgets, another \$500 million for building schools, a better land-claims process, to enact all the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and likewise implement the Kelowna Accord negotiated by the Paul Martin government in 2005. Finally, Justin Trudeau promised, hand over his heart, to "review, repeal and amend all existing laws that do not respect Indigenous rights or that were passed without proper consultation."

That's a long list of promises. But already, he's broken one of the most important among them. First Nations leaders and activists should take note. §

Contents

EDITORIAL

An early report card 3

REZ NOTES

Cloudy with a chance of politics 4

NEWS

Whale-mart opens in Whapmagoostui 5

Investing in the future 7

FEATURES

Meenwach'heewouwan Maskinnou walkers 11

Cree housing crisis 15

Recovering identity 18

WE Day Montreal 25

Nanook of the future 28

Hunting for ISP fraud 31

UTNS

Thinking in Cree 36



William Notman, François Gros-Louis, Huron-Wendat, Montreal, QC, 1866
Musée McCord, 1-20033

Cloudy with a chance of politics

by Sonny Orr



Ahhhh, the warm air masses created by politicians in full oration could thaw the coldest day of winter. What would we do without them? Hmmmm. Naw, not worth sending everyone down south anywhere in North America during the winter months. It's better they hang around home where it's minus-40 on any average day. We need all that hot air anyways.

According to the Farmer's Almanac, the only real trustworthy form of climate prediction, there will be five more storms to contend with until Easter and then afterwards, the warmth comes back. So it looks like we are in for some early geese. It'll be wet though, so be prepared for slushy conditions on the skidoo trails.

Another cool thing about the Farmer's Almanac is that they sell canoe-shaped cribbage boards, which I'm thinking of actually taking up again – canoeing with a deck of cards in my back pocket. The best thing about this great source of information is that there's no politics involved to influence the atmosphere, so it's a pleasure to peruse.

Talking about the weather, weather forecasting back in the day was an art based on well-known tools at hand, such as your local guy who worked at the airport. I worked in the aviation industry for a number of years and learned old-school ways of forecasting using a barometer. Working at the airport – which was just a very long open area of sand servicing two airlines – it was always wise to get all the other daily updates from the other stations along the two coasts of James Bay.

For example, whatever the weather was in Attawapiskat on the west coast of the bay was usually about six hours away from hitting the east coast. This worked quite accurately and I would get calls from the usual guys who wanted to know what the conditions would be at 2:00 pm. Little did I know that these frequent callers had a running bet on my forecasting abilities and apparently I made a few believers out of my critics.

My mentor, the late Walter Pachanos, was able to call the weather conditions by looking out a little window and logging faithfully every call in the radio log. This radio log went back many years and he would pull out the weather report from the year before just to compare it to that day. This often came with a great story and I learnt a lot of bawdy history about the good old days when talking about the weather got a little boring.

Today weather forecasting is a highly skilled technological display of wonderful graphics blasted out at you in so many ways. It's getting so saturated with multimedia forecasting that it's more fun to look for mistakes than take the report for granted. But when out of range of any electronic device, it's good to retain some natural ability to tell weather by eye or feel. For example, if it feels wet outside, it's probably raining.

But age-old ways seem to be just as accurate as the latest array of radar weather stations. Try standing with your back to the wind then stick your left hand straight out, to the left. Point your finger that way and that's where the low-pressure system is and where the next batch of bad weather is coming from. The opposite holds true for figuring out where the high-pressure system is.

Another way is to listen to the winds up in the higher atmosphere: if you can hear the winds from the ground, it is most likely the jet stream up high. This helps in the long-range forecast for windier days, which generally means clear but windy times are ahead. If you hear these sounds on a cloudy or overcast day, get ready for cyclonic activities and put your golfing plans on hold. If it sounds like a freight train, get ready for a long trip away from Kansas.

Weather aside, my forecast for this summer will only be known in July and there won't be any need for politicking to keep us warm. Then they can all take a holiday – or a hike. §

the Nation is published every two weeks by Beesum Communications **EDITORIAL BOARD** L. Stewart, W. Nicholls, M. Siberok, N. Diamond, E. Webb **EDITOR IN CHIEF** Will Nicholls **DIRECTOR OF FINANCES** Linda Ludwick **EDITORS** Lyle Stewart, Martin Siberok, Amy German **PRODUCTION AND SOCIAL MEDIA COORDINATOR** Joshua Grant **CONTRIBUTING WRITERS** L. Stewart, J. Grant, J. Staniforth, J. Iserhoff, S. Orr, X. Kataquapit, P. Wheeland **SALES AND ADVERTISING** Danielle Valade, Lyle Brebner **THANKS TO:** Air Creebec

CONTACT US: The Nation, 4529 CLARK, #403, Montreal, QC, H2T 2T3 **EDITORIAL & ADS** Tel.: 514-272-3077, Fax: 514-278-9914 **HEAD OFFICE:** P.O. Box 151, Chisasibi, QC. J0M 1E0 www.nationnews.ca **EDITORIAL** nation@nationnews.ca news@nationnews.ca **ADS** Danielle Valade: ads@nationnews.ca Lyle Brebner: publicity@nationnews.ca **SUBSCRIPTIONS** \$60 plus taxes, US: \$90, Abroad: \$110 Payable to beesum communications all rights reserved publication mail #40015005 issn #1206-2642 **The Nation is a member of:** The James Bay Cree Communications Society, Circle Of Aboriginal Controlled Publishers, Magazines Canada Quebec Community Newspaper Assn. Canadian Newspapers Assn. Les Hebdomadaires Du Québec We acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada through the Canada Periodical Fund of the Department of Canadian Heritage.



www.nationnews.ca | facebook.com/NATIONnewsmagazine | [Twitter: @creenation_news](https://twitter.com/creenation_news)

Fruit of the land

Whapmagoostui general store offers fresh traditional meats

by Jesse Staniforth



James George, manager of Whapmagoostui general store Whale-mart, readily admits that his store offers similar products to those available at the Co-op and the Northern Store in town. The difference, he says, is that Whale-mart is 100% Cree-owned. And what that means is that you can buy ptarmigan there, which you definitely can't get at the Northern.

The opportunity to stock traditional foods has always been a goal, George said.

"Part of what they wanted when they formed Whale-mart was to put traditional food in the store for those people who cannot go hunt for themselves," said George. "That was the idea from the beginning."

The store just finished its first year in operation. "We're not a co-op – we're run by a corporation called Whapikyo Investment Group that's under the band office," George told *the Nation*. "It was formed back in 2012. I didn't start working for Whale-mart until 2014, but I'm pretty sure when they started they had a plan for a general store."

At the moment George spoke with the *Nation*, the Whale-mart was only stocking ptarmigan and fish, but back in the fall, they also stocked beaver – though not for very long.

"They were out within about two days!" he exclaimed, noting that traditional meat is very popular with people who can't hunt – Elders, those who are dealing with health issues or disabilities, or those for whom hunting is simply too expensive.

"The other problem is that there are hunters and other people trying to sell rotten meat to the Elders," he said. For that reason, Whale-mart has prioritized selling unfrozen meat fresh off the land, and they have put out the call to hunters for fully-cleaned ptarmigan shot with lead-free pellets, for which they've offered to pay \$4 a head to a maximum of 50.

The plan is to expand their stock to caribou in the near future. Because caribou are a sacred animal, George wants to make that step very cautiously, by consulting with Elders who might be upset to see caribou for sale, and by putting the word out on their Facebook group for any comments or concerns before they go ahead with the practice.

"We're still working on the process for how we can handle that," George said. "It's not something you'd just jump on. You have to be careful not to offend the Elders. I grew up learning about the caribou, taking care of the land,

The plan is to expand their stock to caribou in the near future. Because caribou are a sacred animal, George wants to make that step very cautiously, by consulting with Elders who might be upset to see caribou for sale

because my family has been on that source of food for many years. Right now I'm being very careful."

However, George underlined that they had heard no complaints about the idea so far.

"At this point, we're not seeing very many concerns. And lately, Elders have been asking when we'll be able to sell meat."

Part of the reason for that, George said, is that hunting is becoming more difficult for everybody – not just those who have a hard time getting out on the land. Whale-mart had to cancel an expected stock of beaver in early December due to the warm weather.

"As far as I know, you can't really go hunt in the fall because of climate change," he said.

"They're only out on the trapline for four to six weeks. When they're ready to come back, the ice is not good yet to go hunting, and the snow is not deep enough to go further from their camp. It's happening every year – it's getting worse every year."

As access to traditional meat is getting more difficult, having a central point for hunters and trappers to sell their meat may benefit the whole community.

However, a notice on the Whale-mart's Facebook page underlines that country food is first come, first serve – they will not hold ptarmigan for people hoping to call now and shop later. §



Our 2016 trucks have arrived!



With up to \$3,000
in rebates
or 2,99%
interest.

1100, 3e Avenue Est, Val-d'Or, QC J3P 4P8
Tel: (819) 825-6880 1-877-625-6880 Fax: (819) 825-8980
Visit us online at gareauauto.ca
Like us on facebook 

Mario Sylvestre and Jean-Claude Moreau,
our bilingual Sales Representatives, will
welcome you. We pay for your hotel room
when you pick-up your vehicle.
We can deliver it to you too.

**We always have
lightly used Yukons
and Suburbans**



**Distributor of
petroleum products
and lubricants in
the James Bay
Territory.**

Addresses:

**Radisson
Bulk Plant**
Tel.: (819) 638-8222
Fax: (819) 638-7107

**La Grande
Rivière Airport**
Tel.: 819-638-9104
Fax: 819-354-6825

**EM-1
Construction Site**
Tel.: (819) 865-2045
Fax: (819) 865-2039
Cell.: (819) 856-0618

**Chisasibi
Gas Station**
Tel.: (819) 855-2427
Fax: (819) 855-3462

**Administration
office**
Tel.: (819) 824-5505
Fax: (819) 824-5420

Services:

- Delivery of petroleum products in bulk
- Aviation fuel
- Rental of movable tanks

Products:

- Unleaded gas, clear and colored diesel, stove oil, Jet-A, 100LL and lubricants.

Investing in the future

Participants at recent nursing conference say Cree students need more help

by Joshua Grant

The Aboriginal Nurses Association of Canada held its 2016 National Training Forum in Montreal February 16 and 17, bringing together First Nations, Inuit and Métis health-care professionals. The conference featured a Cree Health Board presentation on the “Integration of novice Cree Nurses in Region 18, James Bay Cree”.

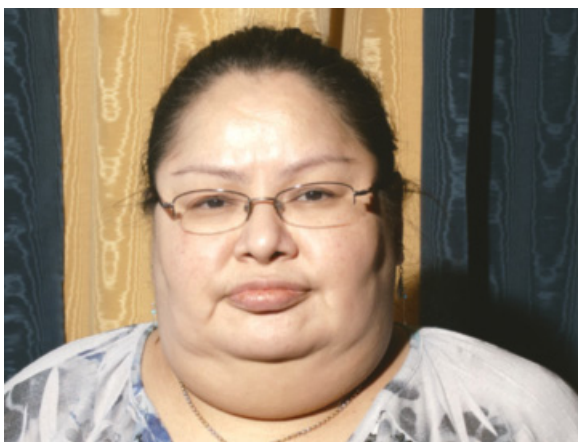
Delivered by Melanie Fisher, Mary Louise Snowboy and Sarah Cowboy, the presentation outlined the issues faced by the health-care industry of Eeyou Istchee. For starters, pre-health science, math and chemistry credits are difficult for secondary students to obtain as they are only available in schools outside of the Cree Nation.

Overall, enrolment in professional health-care programs is very low among Cree students. Earlier attempts to address this, such as the nursing program targeting Aboriginal students previously offered at Cégep Saint-Félicien’s Chibougamau campus, have not produced the desired results. None of the Cree students registered in the program were able to meet the requirements to become a licensed nurse in Quebec.

All of these factors are compounded by the fact that nurses, and other health-care professionals, must pass through several developmental stages in their careers and recently certified nurses do not have the necessary knowledge and skill sets to work on their own in a remote location.

“I’m glad to say that we’re not the only ones,” said Snowboy in an interview following the presentation. “Looking at all the workshops I saw over the course of the conference, other [First Nations] communities across the country are having the same problems getting Aboriginal nurses into mainstream practice and trying to recruit Aboriginals into nursing.”

Snowboy said it’s difficult for potential nurses up north to get the education and proper training needed to pass the required exams. Another key missing ingredient is support and preparation for students



Mary-Louise-Snowboy

who sign up for health-related programs; though the Cree Health Board and Cree School Board are doing everything they can to improve graduation rates.

Overall, less than half of all nursing students passed last year’s English-language licensing exam given by the Quebec Order of Nurses.

“The main goal of our presentation was to emphasize the importance of supporting Cree students when they leave to study outside of their community,” said Snowboy. “It’s very lonely. You’re 1600 kilometres away from home, you need support from your family, you need support from your community.

“There should be support from the Cree Health Board, the Cree School Board and the local band councils,” she continued. “It really helps when you know that there are people back home who want you to finish school.”

Snowboy went on to say that the current high school curriculum should be looked at to see how to improve students’ chances for success in a profession that interests them.

“Students need more than just support, they need preparation. They need to know what to expect. When you’re in college, it’s not the same as high

school. Nobody's going to run after you and tell you, 'Oh you have to finish this work.' You have to be disciplined. That's something we should start teaching in high school. That you have to get up, it's your choice. You have to do this for yourself, if you want to succeed."

Snowboy recalled that when she was in high school, she had the choice of going into a vocational-based, business-focused stream of courses or a science stream that included physics, biology and chemistry. Knowing that she wanted to become a nurse, she naturally gravitated towards the sciences, which helped set her up for her university education and professional career.

"Right now we're trying to improve the education," she said. "I think that system should also be looked at, not just for nurses, but for other professions like pharmacy and radiology. Kids should have the choice [that I did]. Not everyone is going to want to go in to business; they should have a choice where they want to go."

Ultimately, says Snowboy, a health-science-related education must be seen as an investment.

"We have to understand that having Cree professionals is an investment. It's important to have people who are sensitive to Cree culture and sensitive to the needs of Cree people. Not just in nursing, but in other professions."

Snowboy herself is a perfect example of investing in the future. After completing her degree at the University of Ottawa, the Chisasibi Band Council and Cree Human Resources Development paid for her to get additional training in obstetrics, cardiac and emergency at the Royal Victoria Hospital in Montreal.

Now 23 years later, Snowboy is still happily employed with the Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay as a mental-health nurse. §

Lac Simon police officer killed on duty

Rookie Sûreté du Québec Officer Thierry LeRoux was shot to death February 13 while responding to a call about a domestic conflict in Lac Simon. LeRoux was 26 years old. His alleged killer, Joseph Anthony Raymond-Papatie, is 22.

"Shortly after police arrived on the scene, at least one shot was fired in their direction. It was not possible to react," stated SQ spokesperson Claude Denis. After LeRoux was hit, he was transported to the Val-d'Or hospital where he died from his injuries.

Raymond-Papatie is believed to have taken his own life after fatally wounding LeRoux. The shooter left disturbing messages on his Facebook page the night of the incident, one roughly translated from French as, "Sorry everybody, I'm going to kill a police officer."

LeRoux, originally from Amos, had been working in the community for only six months with the local Aboriginal police force and was on his second contract. Collège d'Alma and the provincial police academy in Nicolet, both his alma mater, were joined by many other organizations and individuals across Quebec who mourned his passing and offered his family their condolences.

"The most important way I can pay tribute to him is to say there is no greater sacrifice than giving your life to help others. It's what he wanted to do, and it's what he did," said his father Michel.

Valentine's Day marches for MMIW

Thousands across Canada participated in February 14 marches to honour Aboriginal women who have been victims of violence.

Among others, Montreal, Toronto, Winnipeg, Saskatoon, Vancouver and Victoria saw people take to the streets to remind Canadians of the 1181 cases of missing women reported by the RCMP. The actual



From left to right: Don Saganash, tallyman; Nicolas Mainville, Greenpeace; Chief Ghislain Picard, AFNQL; Chief Marcel Happyjack, Cree First Nation of Waswanipi; Melissa Fillion, Canopy; Pier-Olivier Boudreault, CPAWS; Serge Couturier, biologist

tally of Aboriginal women and girls who have disappeared in the last 20 years is believed to be closer to 3000.

This the first series of national marches to take place since a long-awaited national inquiry was announced by the Trudeau government, which has just concluded a first stage of roundtable discussions and consultation of the families of Indigenous female victims. Activists, advocates and First Nations throughout the country are hoping that 2016 will be a turning point in the way Canada deals with violence against Native women.

Federal Justice Minister Jody Wilson-Raybould highlighted two of the key priorities in the federal inquiry at the march in Vancouver, namely, "To find justice – some measure of justice – for the mur-

dered and missing Indigenous women and girls, and to collectively work to find solutions to ensure that this tragedy does not continue."

Waswanipi pressures Quebec on Broadback

Waswanipi Crees and a coalition of supporters travelled to Quebec City February 22 to press the provincial government on protection for the Broadback region, one of Quebec's last pristine forests.

During a press conference, Chief Marcel Happyjack expressed the community's opposition to the building of two new access roads through the Broadback forest, proposed by Matériaux Blanchet Inc. Awaiting a decision from Quebec's Social Impact Review Committee

(COMEX) on the Blanchet proposal, Happyjack hopes to increase pressure on the Quebec government to protect the remaining untouched forest in the Broadback region in order to preserve Waswanipi's ancestral land and traditional lifestyle.

He was joined by AFNQL Regional Chief Ghislain Picard, Waskaganish Chief Darlene Cheechoo, Nemeska Deputy Chief Greg Jolly, tallyman Don Saganash and several Waswanipi Eeyouch. Standing with them were biologist Serge Couturier and environmental activists Melissa Fillion, Pier-Olivier Boudreault and Nicolas Mainville respectively representing Canopy, the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society and Greenpeace.

When asked what he anticipates from the March 3 COMEX ruling, Chief Happyjack said, "I think it's going to be based on negotiation and compromise on both sides, from Waswanipi and the forestry companies. I don't really want to speculate, but from what I've heard I think that's what might happen."

Already 90% of the Broadback has been disrupted by industry. Critics say that allowing for new access roads would only cause more damage to the ecosystem and the migratory patterns and overall populations of wildlife in the area. §



On the healing path

Tracking the six Meenwach'heewouwan Maskinnou walkers on their route



by Joshua Grant

The Meenwach'heewouwan Maskinnou walkers are on the healing path – the healing path that represents the name of their group and the reason they are snowshoeing from Moose Factory to Chisasibi.

Inspired by Christine Chewanish, the group of walkers includes Chewanish's friends Jaycie Moar and Joane Matowaham, Redfern Mianscum and his daughter Afeni from Oujé-Bougoumou, and Cheryl Moore from Moose Factory.

The six left Moose Factory February 6. With the help of runners from communities along the way, the group is trekking to Waskaganish, Eastmain and Wemindji and stopping at several hunting camps on the route to Chisasibi.

"A friend and I had always talked about doing something like this," said Chewanish, during a stop in Waskaganish. "My friend told me to wait for her, to stop using drugs and alcohol, and I've been waiting for her for five years.

"About a month ago I started thinking I should just start walking. What happened in Val-d'Or with those women [bringing allegations against the Sûreté du Québec] pushed me to get into this walk. I went to see my Chief [in Chisasibi] and told him what my plan was; I told him I wanted to go on a journey."

Chewanish said the name Meenwach'heewouwan Maskinnou was given to the walkers by the Nishiyuu



Council of Elders. She says that she has her story written down, a letter that she carries with her explaining how she's been hurt and why she is walking.

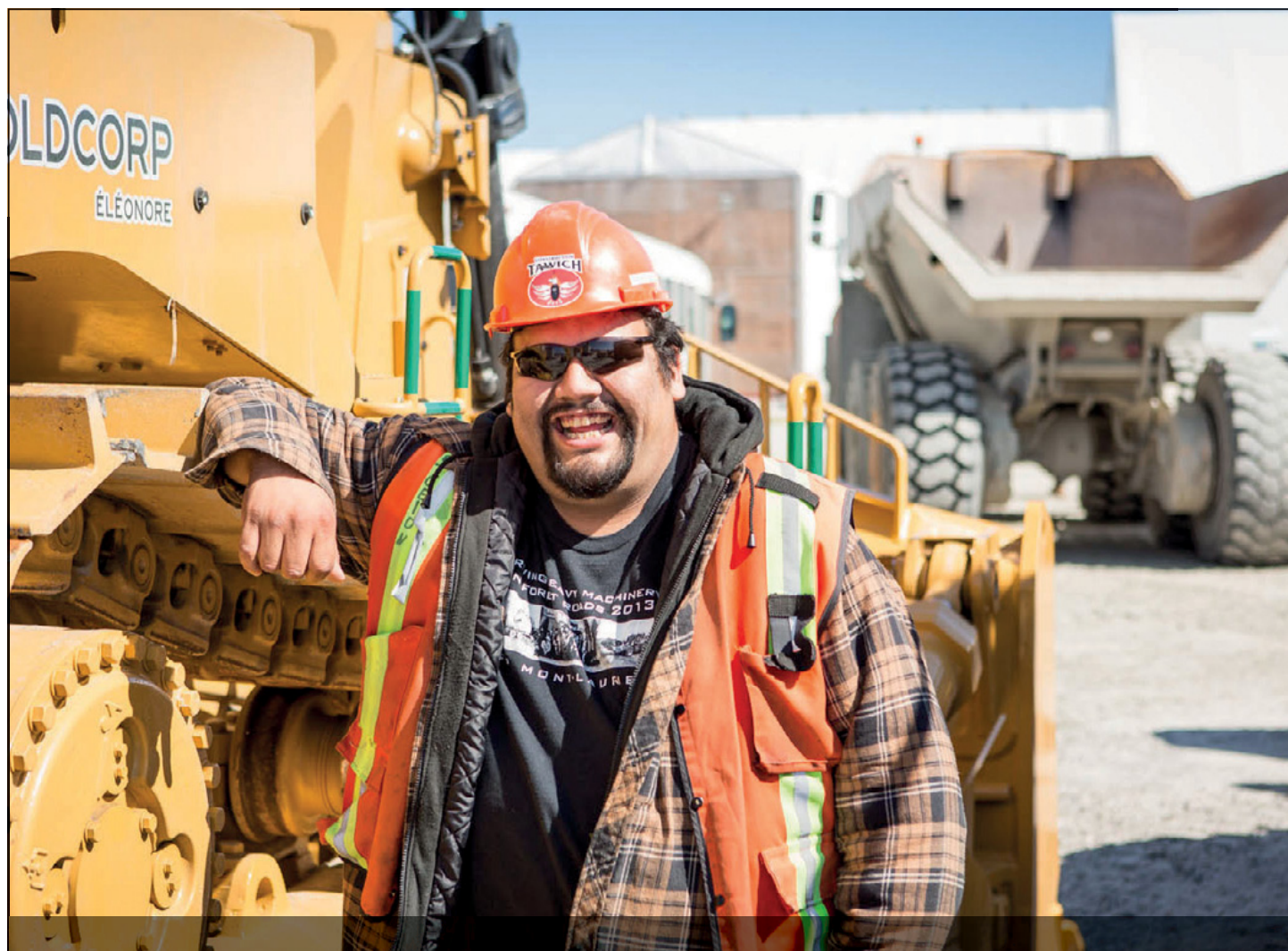
Between her experiences of abuse, the experiences of her friends and the hurt incurred upon her family, her community and her Nation, Chewanish has seen enough and wants to break the cycle of trauma, for herself and for others.

"I want to connect people so they can be strong and help each other heal," she said. "[When out on the road] I feel strong, I find myself. I've been looking for healing for a long time and now I'm trying to help



“It’s a really good energy being out there and connecting with each other as we travel. You can feel the relationship getting stronger as we move along.”

Middle photo: Christine Chewanish holding her snowshoes pointing in different directions which represents returning from one journey and leaving on another.



Thanks to the involvement of all our workers, Éléonore improved its health and safety performance by 90% between 2009 and 2015.

Our goal: To improve our performance each year by reducing the number of recordable injury. We are proud to say that we have reached this objective every year since 2009. As such, in 2009, there were close to 9 recordable work injuries for every 200,000 hours worked* versus less than 1 for 2015.

2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
8.9	4.6	2.2	1.9	1.5	1.2	0.89

This exceptional performance is proof of our workers' investment in and dedication to safety. Thank you!

Safety is everybody's business: Look out for yourself and others at all times, both at work and at home!

*In the industry, the calculation of recordable injury is based on 200,000 hours of work per year. This number of hours corresponds to approximately 100 workers.

 **GOLDCORP**
ÉLÉONORE

A Goldmine of Resources
Une mine de ressources

ᐱᐱ ᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ ᐱᐱᐱᐱ ᐱᐱ ᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ

myself. This is my fourth journey and I really like it. This is where I find my healing.”

Asked about the other walkers’ motivations and inspirations, Chewanish said it’s up to them if they’d like to share. “It’s one thing I never asked them – I’m just waiting for them to say something,” she laughed.

Moore, a nurse from Moose Factory, said Chewanish is a source of inspiration. When she heard about Chewanish’s intention to put together a healing walk, Moore immediately wanted to join.

“When I heard about Christine coming to the community, I said to myself, ‘Oh, I wish I could go!’” she recalled. “But then I started thinking about work, because it’s a long trip. But the band I work for said that if I wanted to go they would support me, so I said, ‘Okay I’m going!’ and it’s been really good since we’ve left.”

While the journey was a little spur of the moment, Moore stated that so far everything has come together for the walkers.

“There was no plan in place or no money,” Moore said, referring to Chewanish setting the walk in motion with the help of organizers Gertie and Rene Neacappo. “She’s just going with the flow and people are supporting it. Each community has been really helpful – it’s really awesome. So far we’re six, but there will be more people joining us in Eastmain and Wemindji.

“They were really nice to us in Waskaganish,” she continued, “greeting us, feeding us, presenting us with special gifts. In Moose Factory, they introduced us at the powwow and we had a service at the Community Complex. One Cree business gave us a bunch of food.”

Describing the journey so far, Moore said, “We stopped at three camps between Moose Factory and Waskaganish. We all walked and Redfern walked across the bay for us, plus we had runners helping us.

“It’s been exciting, it’s been tiring, it’s been emotional and it’s been powerful. It’s a really good energy being out there and connecting with each other as we travel. You can feel the relationship getting stronger as we move along.”

Outlining the walkers’ daily travelling routine, Moore said the six are pulling a sled with their essentials while runners from each destination help carry some of the heavier stuff. “We stop for a break once in a while, but we try to just keep going [when we’re on the road],” she said.

“We’re walking about 20, 25 kilometres a day and there’s no real set plan or route that we’re following. We’re just going, seeking healing and getting information from each other and from the communities.”

Moore declined to go into the details of her personal life and the difficulties that she’s faced, but admitted that there have been many challenges over the years.

“Everybody has personal stories and struggles that they’re going through,” she said. “That’s a common thing for a lot of people and we need to make it known. We’re all struggling and we need to help each other. With Chewanish’s vision and her drive to do this, things are really going well.”

Since speaking with *the Nation*, the Meenwach’heewouwan Maskinnou arrived and departed Eastmain, soldiered on to Wemindji and are scheduled to arrive in Chisasibi by March 5 §



On the healing path



Getting ready for a generous warm meal in Eastmain



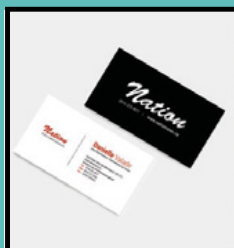
Cheryl Moore from Moose Factory



WE HAVE
WHAT YOU NEED

What Does Your Business Need?

Print | Design | Promo | Translation | Branding | Signage



Beesum Communications is a *First Nations Company*.

WE PUT FIRST NATIONS NEEDS FIRST.

CONTACT US TODAY FOR A **FREE QUOTE !**

514-272-3077 | info@beesum.com | beesum.com



Gimme shelter

Cree housing crisis is forcing families to relocate

by Peter Wheeland



Henry Mianscum

The Cree Nation Government is launching efforts it hopes will address the crisis-level lack of decent, affordable housing. CNG hopes to more than double the existing housing stock by building 5250 new units over the next 15 years.

"It's a big task, but I think it's doable," said Henry Mianscum, the director of the Capital Works and Services department and the man the CNG has chosen to lead its housing planning group.

"We have the right core of people to get it going," he told *the Nation*. The planning group, which includes key officials from local communities, is getting input from the health and school boards and people specialized in areas like home financing and construction.

Mianscum recognizes there is a high level of frustration over both the quantity and quality of existing housing.

In 2013, the inventory of housing stock for the entire Cree nation was 3,879 houses (including 1,629 built by the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation), most of which needed major renovations.

"There are so many people who are homeless," Mianscum observed. "They need homes and they are getting the same information from one community to the next: We don't have a housing program. We don't have the resources. We don't have the professional people to provide advice. That's a concern that our leadership has, that we have the same bitter news for people that are looking for homes."

Mianscum says the decision to make it a priority will help pool resources and expertise.

"We're trying to intervene at the regional level, the CNG level, so that we can assist the local governments and their community members," he said. "I have great confidence in the Cree leadership. They are the ones who are looking at housing as a priority. That has a significant effect on everybody: once we know that the Cree leadership is behind what is needed: it gives you a good motivation, good inspiration to do your best to try to help."

Particular problems

Housing for Indigenous peoples often poses problems in the best of circumstances, but the communities of the Eeyou Istchee face a particularly difficult challenge that includes:

- A highly unpredictable construction season. "There are many challenges when you are constructing in the northern milieu, the weather being one," Mianscum notes.
- Difficult/expensive transportation of building materials. "It's a long haul and the roads aren't in as good a condition as they should be on the James Bay Highway."
- Severe shortage of skilled workers. A recent labour survey found just three master carpenters, one master electrician and one certified electrician in the entire territory of Eeyou Istchee. Although the Cree School Board's continuing education department and CNG's Human

“There are so many people who are homeless. They need homes and they are getting the same information from one community to the next: We don’t have a housing program. We don’t have the resources. We don’t have the professional people to provide advice.”

Resources Development department have offered various levels of courses in plumbing, carpentry and electrical work, the planning committee is looking at how to meet labour needs in the long term. Capital Works Coordinator Martin Gagnier told the working committee that “a trade worker assessment needs to be conducted” and a training plan drawn up that would “include house inspectors, maintenance workers and specialized trades.”

- A difficult environment. Extreme weather and shifting permafrost in northern areas pose particular problems for housing, especially when it comes to the construction of stable foundations.

As in other Indigenous communities, it’s also difficult for many Cree to obtain reasonable financing terms for home construction. Section 89.1 of the Federal Indian Act bars banks from seizing on-reserve properties in case of non-payment. That means banks won’t provide mortgages that use the home as collateral.

Some Native communities, such as the Huron-Wendat Wendake reserve near Quebec City, have had great success with band-controlled Revolving Loan Fund programs where money is pooled and lent out to build, renovate and purchase on-reserve homes. The interest revenue and capital repayment goes back into the fund, where it’s used to make additional loans.

“They are very successful in assisting their community members to build their private homes. It’s not a new concept but it’s a new undertaking by the Cree Nation,” said Mianscum, who noted however that such a program here is “still a ways off.”

Southern drift

Meanwhile, however, the housing shortage is driving many Cree to settle further south.

A report presented to the CNG directors in December noted that “a large number of Cree

First Nation families have moved away from their home communities because of inadequate and insufficient housing and this trend is continuing. These families are relocating to other towns and cities, such as Montreal, Ottawa, Val-d’Or, Gatineau, Chibougamau.”

Mianscum says the shift is understandable.

“Many of our people have gone down south to study. Depending on the program they are in, they could go up to five years or longer.” When they start looking to come home, the housing crunch leaves few options.

“Some community members have no alternative but to try to find a home in nearby communities. You can’t blame them when there is nothing in the (Cree) community as a housing alternative. They have to provide for their family and that’s the only option they have. That’s why we’re getting very concerned about the number of people that are starting to go in that direction.”

To meet the housing targets, the communities would need to see the construction of as many as 350 to 500 units a year, including both private and low-income housing. In addition, “a lot of the homes that been built 20, 30, 40 years ago require major renovations,” Mianscum stated.

At the same time, “we want to build homes that are affordable,” he said. “That’s something we are prioritizing. And we are looking at ways of utilizing the resources that we have, both regional and local.”

The arrival of a new government in Ottawa that has said the Native housing crisis is near the top of its agenda is welcome, but Mianscum is cautious. “They look good in terms of promises about the First Nations housing situation, but we haven’t seen anything,” he noted.

Of possible federal assistance, Mianscum said, “it’s premature” to depend on possible assistance. But he is confident the Cree community is able to address the crisis. §

Recovering identity

Algonquin artist Nadia Myre looks to the Indian fixation of Victorian-era periodicals for inspiration

by Martin Siberok

In the middle of the darkened exhibition space is a large horizontal video screen two feet above the ground. Standing over it, you watch two pairs of hands – one on either side of the screen – diligently working away on handicrafts.

These hands are busy measuring material, outlining shapes, sketching images, folding cloth, cutting leather and stringing beads. It is only when you walk around the room that

you realize the hands belong to Algonquin artist Nadia Myre, the driving force behind this multidisciplinary show.

It is then that you see the creations of Myre's adept handiwork placed behind the glass of the display cases alongside traditional artifacts made in the 19th century by various members of other First Nations communities – including Haudenosaunee, Mi'kmaq and Coast Salish.

Myre's latest artistic endeavour is titled *Decolonial Gestures or Doing it Wrong? Refaire le chemin*. It opened February 18 at the McCord Museum, where she is the artist-in-residence. The exhibit is her final project that summarizes the research and work she's been doing for the past year at the museum.

Sifting through the museum's large collection of First Nations artifacts, Myre uses a mix of



Steele & Co., Interior of G. W. Gill's home, Winnipeg, MN, about 1890, Gift of David Ross McCord, McCord Museum, MP-0000.346

objects, photographs, books and paintings to shed light on traditional Aboriginal crafts.

A member of the Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg First Nation – located next to Maniwaki – Myre uses her show to illustrate how she is engaged in recovering a Native identity.

Set up in front of the display cases are headphone boxes that allow you to hear the instructions Myre followed in making her four original pieces – a pair of moccasins, a bag, a hair-receiver and a basket. What you quickly realize is that her contemporary pieces are not out of place positioned next to artifacts made 100 or 150 years ago. The attention to detail and purpose is evident. The new pieces serve as a reminder that the traditional process continues.

Myre's black-and-red shoulder bag with dangling yellow-and-white braids and nine white feathers delicately stitched on the flap is a something a young Native woman in the 18th or 19th century could easily have made.

Myre's objective is to underline the idea that with colonization came a devaluing of traditional artifacts. This is stated in one of the explanatory texts: "Museums function as active agents in the process of decontextualization; many artifacts from the First Nations collection have lost their cultural function as a result of 'being collected' and removed from their communities, and, in turn, many communities have lost the cultural knowledge of these objects.

"The production of these re-imagined pieces epitomizes personal learning, re-skilling, as well as a system of knowledge transmission. Their creation allows me to restore the cognitive processes that have been the backbone of Native cultures; in revitalizing a material practice, I am performing a decolonial gesture and forging a cultural identity."

Bag
Nadia Myre, 2015



[illegible]

Δσζ" <ΓΛΖ"ζζ"υ σζΛΠζ·Δσζ.ε

- [illegible]

◁ Γρσ"Δ̇ΛΠ]·▷ρσ·Δ': **Byyourself@cngov.ca**



When preparing for band council elections, First Nations governments often forget the Supreme Court of Canada's 1999 Corbière decision. That ruling confirmed the equal right of off-reserve members to vote in band elections.

To ensure off-reserve members benefit from this right, they must be properly informed, in advance, of an upcoming election. Failure to respect this right could lead to a court battle and a costly re-vote.

For further information on how to guarantee a fair election for all band members, contact *the Nation* at 514-272-3077.



Victorian inspiration

Myre discovered that women in Victorian society had a fascination for Indigenous artwork. Many women's periodicals of the time featured articles instructing their readers how to produce bead- and needlework items.

These periodicals provided a window to the world and faraway places and peoples. Exoticism was in vogue and the readers wanting to enjoy fascination could follow the detailed instructions the publication provided and create colourful and exotic pieces.

A quote from the London-based *Lady's Newspaper and Pictorial Times* of April 2, 1859, states: "...taste is not confined to any clime or country nor yet to any condition of existence. This beautiful piece of bead-work carries us, by a natural transition of thought, far across the Atlantic, into the recesses of Indian life."

The exhibit showcases a number of books directed to the female reader. Whether published in London, Paris or New York, the interest for the exotic was widely shared.

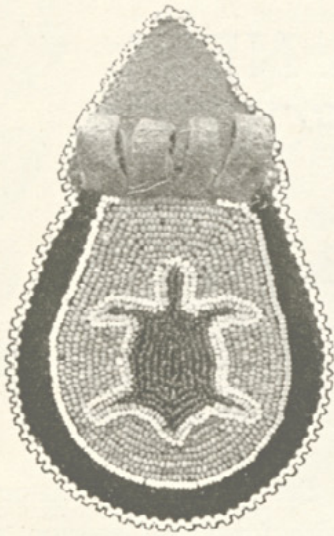
Top: Le Conseiller des Dames et des Demoiselles. Journal d'economie domestique et de travaux a l'aiguille Administration et Redaction, Paris, 1852 Monthly Periodical (1847-1892), Vol. 5 McCord Museum, RB-2203

William Notman, James Wilson,
Montreal, QC, 1876,
McCord Museum, II-42179.1



HOW TO MAKE THE INDIAN BEAD WORK

Designs Which May Easily be Reproduced



TRICK PURSE BEADED



PENCIL HOLDER



BEADED WATCH-STRAP

THE Indians have always been fond of ornaments of all kinds, and usually wear necklaces, armlets, bracelets and earrings. Their necklaces are sometimes made of beads and sometimes of claws, shells, antelope hoofs, the teeth of various animals and pieces of ivory and bone. Silver ornaments are

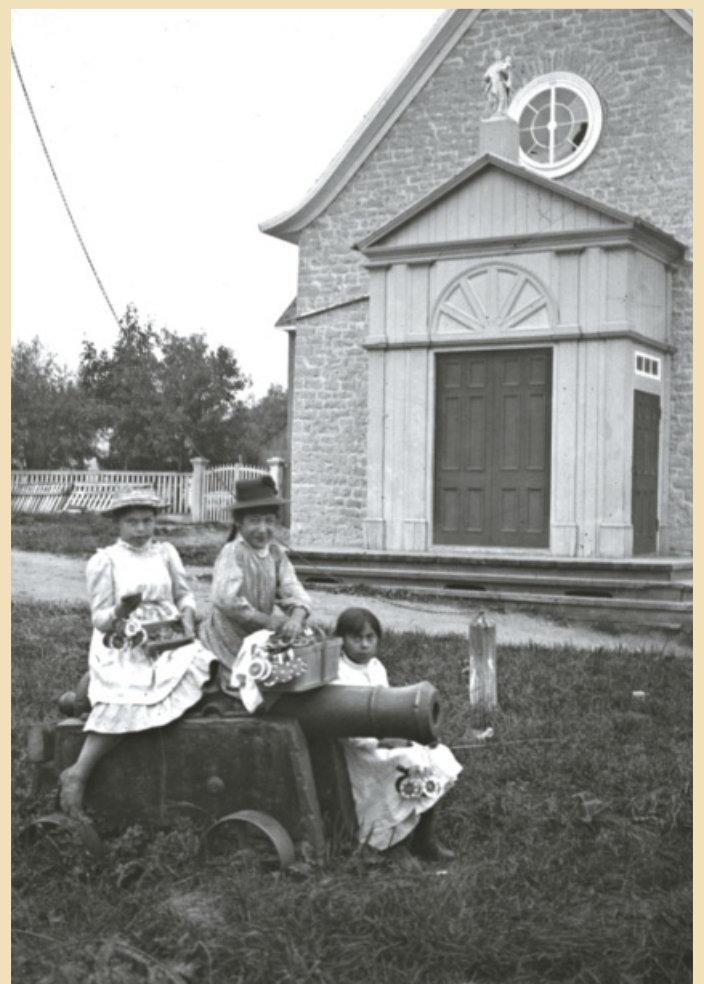


Bag

1900-1930

Anishinaabe, possibly Saulteaux Hide, cotton cloth, silk, glass beads, rabbit fur, cotton thread

McCord Museum, ME966X.121



Wallis & Shepherd, Eliza Huberge, Houlida Sione and Aida Gros-Louis, three Huron-Wendat girls, Wendake, QC, about 1900, Gift of Stanley G. Triggs, McCord Museum, MP-0000.27.216

AS T... in the... Indi... chains... lar within recent months that a loom has been devised by which, with the aid of a little ingenuity and the proper material, very good imi-

blue and... str... belt of blue and white and the one of... gilt beads are fastened with metal... of Indian design. Similar buttons... urchased at almost any of the large... oven belt with fringed ends is formed... of blue and white beads and made over a loom. The wool is of number fifty linen

sent people searching f... and those who cannot l... copying the patterns. to reproduce and the... beads make them fasc... Fashion writers declar... the fad, and the women... times are already buy... the... pi...

"How to make the Indian Bead Work" by Frances Roberts.
The Ladies' Home Journal, Vol. 20, No.9,
The Curtis Publishing Company, Philadelphia, 1903



Cornelius Krieghoff
Aboriginal Woman with basket of
moccasins and embroidered pouches
About 1847-1852
Oil on canvas
Gift of Reverend L. Donahue McCord
Museum, M984.53

Also included in the exhibit are a number of black-and-white photographs. Several of them feature Native women and girls selling their beadwork and crafts. Others depict Victorian women in their homes engaged in making similar handicrafts – presumably following the instructions found in their favourite periodical.

The most intriguing photo, titled *Interior of G. W. Gill's Home*, highlights a Winnipeg woman sitting in her parlour, a large sleeping dog at her feet and the walls adorned with Native and Native-inspired artifacts.

Two black-and-white portraits by noted Montreal photographer William Notman are nicely juxtaposed. One captures the intense-looking Huron-Wendat hunter François Gros-Louis holding snowshoes, moccasins and other items he is prepared to sell (1866). The other features a dashing James Wilson, wearing a white hunting outfit in front of a wintery backdrop, and carrying a rifle and embroidered pouch (1876). While one sells his wares to survive, the other poses in them in a moment of exotic pretence.

Myre tackles the issue faced by many Indigenous communities of reclaiming their traditional output. It is a concern that resonates with Indigenous peoples around the world, when faced with the realization that many of their cultural artifacts reside in the air-conditioned vaults of museums and private collections located in the countries of the former colonial powers – completely isolated from the cultures that created them.

As Myre firmly underlines, the need to reconnect is of utmost importance. It is only through this linkage that identity can be recovered, enlivened and maintained.

Decolonial Gestures or Doing it Wrong? Refaire le chemin. at Montreal's McCord Museum until May 29 §





All together now

WE Day Montreal inspires kids to change their world

by Joshua Grant

As people packed in to WE Day Montreal on a Monday morning at Théâtre St-Denis there was a wave of energy and excitement coursing through the crowd. Close to 2000 elementary and high school students, teachers and parents were on hand February 22 to celebrate the accomplishments of their peers and to prepare a year of action intended to make the world a better place.

This year's WE Day Montreal featured a number of well-known speakers and performers, including founder Craig Kielburger, Quebec TV personality Maripier Morin, rap artist Kardinal Offishall, Academy Award winner Marlee Matlin, author Joseph Boyden and Quebec's first Aboriginal surgeon, Stanley Vollant.

WE Day aims to empower youth and encourages them to take action

in their own community or elsewhere in the world. Created by Kielburger, WE Day began with Free the Children, a charity effort that has grown into a number of different charitable organizations: Me to We, We365 and the WEschools program all offer support for fundraising and grassroots initiatives.

Young people willing to mobilize and raise money can travel to places like Kenya, India and rural China to help build schools, develop fresh water sources, support local infrastructure or tackle a social issue and launch a project of their own closer to home.

The audience heard from people like Spencer West, who lost his legs from the pelvis down to a genetic disorder at the age of five. He has nonetheless managed to lead a fulfilling and inspiring life of public speaking and social work (he's been involved in

WE Day for over five years). In 2012, West raised over \$300,000 for a clean-water initiative by climbing Mount Kilimanjaro, travelling most of the way up using only his hands.

Matlin had an American Sign Language interpreter with her to explain how she lost her hearing at 18 months old and went on to become an award-winning actor despite her deafness and her critics.

Vollant talked about the racism he faced as a First Nations student working his way from the community of Pessamit in northern Quebec to a doctorate in Quebec's education system. Vollant is now Quebec's first Aboriginal surgeon who also made headlines for his 6000-kilometre Innu Meshkenu walk that took him to all the First Nations communities of eastern Canada from 2000 to 2015.

Boyden shared his feelings on mental illness and eliminating the stig-

Public Notice

Ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement
et de la Lutte contre les changements climatiques

DEPOLLUTION ATTESTATION PROJECT

FILE NO 7610-10-01-70018

MINING ESTABLISHMENT: BACHELOR LAKE MINING SITE – METANOR RESOURCES INC.

Notice is given to the public that the Minister of Sustainable Development, Environment and the Fight against Climate Change, in accordance with Division IV.2 of the Environment Quality Act, intends to issue a depollution attestation to the Bachelor Lake Mining Site – Metanor Resources Inc. industrial establishment located at the following address: 200 chemin de la Mine, Desmaraisville, Québec J0Y 1H0.

The file pertaining to the depollution attestation project can be consulted from March 7 to April 20, 2016 at the following locations: Lebel-sur-le-Quévillon library, located at 500 place Quévillon, Lebel-sur-Quévillon, Québec J0Y 1X0 and at the offices of the Cree First Nation of Waswanipi, located at 1 Chief Louis R. Gull Street, Waswanipi, Québec J0Y 3C0.

The file pertaining to the depollution attestation project can be consulted from March 7 to April 20, 2016 on the website of the Ministère at www.mddelcc.gouv.qc.ca. The file may also be consulted at the office of the Ministère in Rouyn-Noranda at 180 boulevard Rideau, 1st floor, Rouyn-Noranda, Québec J9X 1N9.

The file is available for consultation during normal opening hours of the Lebel-sur-Quévillon municipal library and at the offices of the Cree First Nation of Waswanipi.

The Minister of Sustainable Development, Environment and the Fight against Climate Change,

David Heurtel

Québec 

Too many dogs?
It's up to you.



MEGA CENTRE
Kubota
Pro-Ab Équipement (2003) Inc.
Sales - Service - Rentals

To discover the extent of our know-how, visit our website.



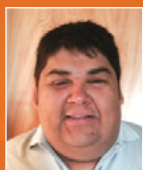
819-874-1138
www.megacentrekubota.com

5081232

Regional Radio Show on Housing

from the Capital Works and Services Department / Housing and ownership in the Cree Nation

WEDNESDAY MARCH 16, 12:15 TO 12:45



Your host:
Lawrence P. Katapatuk
Regional Housing Planner

Live from
Mistissini

Join us on JBCCS
(James Bay Cree Communications Society)
every third Wednesday of every month

Stay tuned! Amazing prizes
to be won during the show



ᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ ᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ
Cree Nation Government
Gouvernement de la Nation Crie
CAPITAL WORKS & SERVICES



ma surrounding it, saying we need to approach mental-health issues the same way we approach physical ailments. Boyden described the darkness of depression he faced as a teenager, even attempting suicide at the age of 16. By turning to writing, he was able to voice his deeper feelings. He urged people to be sensitive to others, to seek positive, creative and artistic releases and to not hesitate to reach out and seek help when life's problems seem too great to overcome.

"It's an incredible opportunity to speak about issues that are dear to me that I think are really important for our youth," Boyden told *the Nation*. "It's about empowering youth, allowing them to understand that they have all of the capabilities and all of the power within them to change the world, one thing at a time.

"That's what is so brilliant about WE Day. You can't buy a ticket. The way to earn your way in is to do something good for somebody else. Part of my argument around mental-health issues is that once people stop worrying about self and start helping others, there will be a lot of benefits that come out of that."

The Cree Nation Government's Justice and Correctional Services Department brought a group of Cree youth from the Upaahchikush Group Home

and the Healing Services Reception Centre in Mississauga to WE Day. Justice Director Donald Nicholls and Prevention Program Officer Celina Jimikin accompanied the group from Mississauga and both said that the Montreal WE Day showed the kids the potential they have to create change in their own lives and in the lives of those around them.

"WE day is about empowering children and youth to make a difference, but it's also about showing them that there are kids from their province and their country who are doing amazing things," said Nicholls. "They don't need to wait until they're older, they can start acting in their community now. They can help other Indigenous kids now, whether it's in Quebec, Canada or somewhere else in the world. It's one of the core values within Cree society, to help others. It builds character."

All in all WE Day is a truly positive experience that inspires hundreds of thousands of young people in Canada, the United States and the United Kingdom to stand up and take action to make the world a better place. It would be amazing to see the movement pick up some of the issues faced by Indigenous youth and First Nations communities here in Canada at a time when there is a lot of hope for reconciliation and healing. §



Nanook of the future

Avant-garde Inuk singer Tanya Tagaq deflects the “colonial lens” of the famous documentary

by Jesse Staniforth

Tanya Tagaq sold out two nights at Montreal’s Place des Arts, and both shows ended with standing ovations. However difficult Tagaq’s music may be for some listeners, she is loved by others.

Cambridge Bay’s Tagaq and her band were in Montreal on February 19 and 20 performing an improvised soundtrack to the 1922 silent documentary *Nanook of the North*, a film with which she says she has a complicated relationship.

“There’s a bunch of bullshit in there,” she said. “But it’s clouded over by my love for my own culture. There are a lot of layers and depths to the film, and also in how it makes me feel. I feel a lot of pride for my ancestors, that they could possibly maintain life in such a harsh environment. I also like the idea of commenting on the colonial lens – just really taking the stereotypes, and the different viewpoint from our own, and commenting on it sonically.”

Tagaq was generous with her assessment of *Nanook*’s director Robert Flaherty, who changed the name of the film’s main character Allakariallak, insisted he hunt with a spear instead of his usual rifle, and presented another woman as his wife. In a 2014 interview with the CBC, Tagaq described the film as full of “happy Eskimo stereotypes.” However, she acknowledged that her understanding of Flaherty and his motives was complicated by his years



on the land, living alongside the people he filmed.

“I believe that [Flaherty cared about his subjects] only because he had to live up in Nunavut and I know that beautiful land – it’s so healing and so wonderful. He must have had a great time up there if he got to know the land and the people. It’s a wonderful experience. I can only imagine that any harm that would have come out of the interaction would have been unwillful.”

The film is 79 minutes long, and onstage, Tagaq sings all 79 minutes as one unbroken song in her unique avant-garde style, accompanied by the shimmering strings of Jesse Zubot on violin and Bernard Feliz on guitar and sensitive percussion of Jean Martin. What she performs is a long

way from traditional throat singing. She is careful to underline that, because she knows some Inuit traditionalists are offended by her use of ancestral techniques in music that is so much about the present moment that it almost seems to be the future. In performance, Tagaq is nothing but herself – her own style of music, her own genre, her own atmosphere.

“The sounds of throat-singing are attached to our culture,” Tagaq explained. “It began a personal thing where it was a good conduit for expression. But it’s become something really inexplicable to me: it’s this other dimension that I get to visit for a while, another reality that we create with sound. It’s unrelated to the rest of the time. You know, when you’re giving birth, you’re giving birth in that



moment and nothing else is happening. I kind of feel like that during the shows – like nothing else can exist for my reality when this is going on.”

Tagaq recognizes and respects that her music is not for everybody. Lovers of throat-singing may not like it because it departs so radically from the structure and predictable melody of pop, country, rock or hip-hop radio is bound to find it difficult to grasp her voice as it darts from birdlike melody to wolf-howls to growls to the heavy breaths of a portaging hunter to the shouts and laughter of children.

These sounds may be new in music, but they’re not new to the land or to those who know it. In order to exist in the moment along with her, the audience has to trust her and let her voice carry them across the landscape of her memory and her vision of the North. In Montreal, the entire room seemed to become the screen on which the film was showing, with Tagaq’s huge and human voice as the light of the projector.

“Sometimes it feels like a beacon, a little bit, to have comfort in our lives knowing we’re alive right now, that we’re blessed to be alive right now,”

she told *the Nation*. “Our flesh is such an accumulation of this beautiful equation of time and all the torque that comes from behind us from our ancestors and has pushed us into the crest of the wave of life. How we only have a bit of time until we’re not at the crest of our wave anymore, we’re back underneath. So I think it’s a nice reminder to enjoy and be aware and be grateful.”

Crowds in Montreal made that gratitude plain. On both nights the standing ovations were loud and long. §



Your consultant: Yvon St-Pierre
yvonestpierre@barrautechrysler.ca

819-825-0880
Toll-free: 1-888-250-7081

2016 Dodge
Ram Rebel 1500



THIS IS GUTS. THIS IS GLORY. THIS IS RAM.

215, 3eme Avenue, Val-d'Or, Quebec • www.automobilesbarraute.com



RAM

Jeep



SHAPE YOUR NATION'S FUTURE



McGill

School of
Continuing Studies

LEARN. CONNECT. ELEVATE.

ONLINE COURSES FOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Earn a McGill education in **computer information systems**
or **business management** from the comfort of your community.

Upcoming courses:

Business Management:

- **March 7:** Public Administration and Law for Indigenous Peoples
- **June 6:** Managing in Public and Non-Profit Organizations

Computer Information Systems:

- **March 9:** Data Structures and Algorithms
- **September 14:** Introduction to Computer Information Systems

FOR MORE INFORMATION,
PLEASE CONTACT:

Amanda Lim, Project Leader
Career and Professional
Development
Telephone: 514-398-6469
Email: amanda.lim@mcgill.ca

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH:



Cree First Nation of
WASWANIPÍ

Funded by Indigenous and Northern
Affairs Canada

WWW.MCGILL.CA/SCS-ONLINE

Hunting for ISP fraud

Income Security Program for hunters and trappers facing overhaul

by Joshua Iserhoff

Last summer's Annual General Assembly in Oujé-Bougoumou was one of the most intriguing gatherings I have attended. Perhaps it was the brutal honesty that came from one of the founding fathers of the James Bay Northern Quebec Agreement, Philip Awashish. When this guy speaks, he's got my ears up like a rabbit.

Some people, he contended, consider the Income Security Program as a slush fund. Choosing his words carefully, Awashish silenced the assembly. There are many Eeyouch/Eenouch who misuse public funds, he said. There are "Jim'muit'skitch" (thieves) in the territories.

I think this issue should be discussed at every dinner table in the Cree Nation. When Awashish said "sanctions and penalties" would be on the agenda at the next negotiations, the AGA perhaps didn't understand the challenge faced by our real hunters and trappers. Perhaps the message was too harsh for some to digest and, as we know in the Cree Nation, we seem to sweep the tangible issues under the rug.

I remember years ago hearing young guys talking nonchalantly how you can get on ISP and never have to leave the community. "No one will check if you're in the bush anyhow!" I didn't realize the scope of the problem until I heard it again from the ISP board tour in Eeyou Istchee.

Judging by a recent public forum in Nemaska, the problem has caught the attention of those who manage the program. From 7:00 pm until almost midnight, the ISP General Director Serge Larivière, board president Willie Iserhoff and board members George Shecapio and George Wapachee discussed the challenging situation the ISP is facing.

Many people offered suggestions to add to the negotiations with the Quebec government in 2017 to renew the ISP. Hunters and trappers supported measures to implement sanctions and penalties for those who defraud the program.

Furthermore, we have many retirees from Eeyou organizations drawing pensions. The Cree Pension Plan is the second best in Quebec (after Hydro-Québec's, go figure). Do you think these folk with good pension plans should benefit from the ISP?

I remember years ago hearing young guys talking nonchalantly how you can get on ISP and never have to leave the community. "No one will check if you're in the bush anyhow!"



Point per / Painting by: Frank Polson "Young Circle Dancer"

For further information regarding Hotel Dieu Hospital, please visit our website at: www.hoteldieu.com



Some commenters on social media say they would like to apply for the ISP but that may change due to pension plans. One member proposed that the ISP be in a separate envelope than social assistance. A Facebook friend mentioned that the ISP is another form of welfare and that people on welfare can stay wherever they want and do absolutely nothing. To me, that's very true.

However, this agreement was exclusively intended to compensate our hunters and trappers. The real ones. The ones who hunt and trap and not the ones who just stay indoors 24/7. (At least have a tan when you're picking up your ISP cheque!)

If we look around each of our communities, many of our hunter and trappers – our Elders who stayed out on the land – have passed away. Only a few remain out on the land. Times are changing.

There are people who want the ISP to have programs for the youth. Good idea. However, there are a few questions we should ask ourselves. Who qualifies to be in the program? Do we want monitors like game wardens across Eeyou Istchee? Should we survey if recipients truly live out on the land? Should we use drones to verify?

We always seem to play the blame game – it's always someone else's fault. It's the ISP board. It's the government. It's because of this and that.

No. It's our fault. We let this situation happen for far too long and no one ever said a thing. We've overlooked this issue and now the true hunters and trappers are paying for it.

Who qualifies to be in the program? Do we want monitors like game wardens across Eeyou Istchee? Should we survey if recipients truly live out on the land? Should we use drones to verify?

Now things are going to change. In order to guarantee economic security for our hunters and trappers we need to stop these fraudulent people. We need to put in place sanctions and penalties. One thing is certain: the Cree Trappers Association committee will now have the full authority to refuse or accept applicants for ISP funding. The ISP administrator will only work closely with the local CTA committee.

Honesty is a virtue. Respecting the conditions of anything is noble. The teachings of the Elders are our guiding principles. I'd like to see continued ISP funding for the hunters and trappers who cannot be in the bush anymore due to old age. We can utilize their extensive knowledge and wisdom to teach our young people in our communities.

Perhaps then we will see young hunters and trappers really take advantage of this valuable program that we are privileged to have in Eeyou Istchee. Let us act to ensure that hunting families continue to be supported. §

Gunsmith on location in Matagami

 **Distribution Nord-Select**

HUNTING • FISHING • GENERAL STORE • FURNITURE

Matagami: 4 rue Nottaway 819-739-3883
Now in Chisasibi 819-855-2062
 marc-andre@nord-select.qc.ca Delivery to James Bay - C.O.D.

Thinking in Cree

UNDER THE
NORTHERN SKY

by Xavier Kataquapit



“N ee Ee-Nee-Nee-Moo-N Ah-S-Pah-N Ee Wah-Shee-Shee-Yah-N,” means I have spoken Cree since I was a child.

Although both my parents spoke some English and even learned a little French during their time at residential school, the language my brothers and sisters and I grew up in at home was Cree. For the first 20 years of my life, it was my main language and it was the form of communication I was most comfortable with.

In grade school, I only spoke Cree. I was a good student in my English lessons and I could read and write in this foreign language, but, like my friends and relations, I never found a reason to speak it outside of class. As a matter of fact, as children, we would make fun of one another for speaking English. Due to the fact that I could speak a lot of English I was picked on and made fun of. It was such a foreign language to most of us that often many of my peers would mock anyone who pronounced an English phrase or used an English word in a conversation. The only time we found it necessary to pronounce any English words was during our daily lessons at school. Otherwise, we spoke to one another, our parents, our Elders and any adults in the community in the Cree language.

As a consequence, I had a hard time in high school. Back then, we had no high school in the community and were flown out to secondary schools in Timmins and North Bay. I was 13 in Grade 9 and my first year of high school was a challenge. The rest of my first-year peers and I from Attawapiskat were a group of very shy, quiet students who found it difficult to communicate with anyone in the school outside our own circle.

We understood the English language but we were hesitant and uneasy to speak it.

As if life leaving home and living in a foreign culture wasn't hard enough, we also had to deal with the added burden of communicating in a language that was not our own. It took me a long time to learn to speak to others comfortably in the English language and even then I found it strange. I found myself having to form ideas in my mind in Cree, translate them to English and then find the words to speak them aloud. I could read and understand my studies easily enough, but I struggled to carry on a simple conversation. In addition, the competition was great in the outside world and I was no longer the smartest kid in the class.

I was happy to return home in the early 1990s when Attawapiskat opened the Vezina Secondary School. My spoken English language skills lapsed again during this time as I reverted back to communicating with everyone around me in my familiar Cree mother tongue. I was able to complete my secondary education in the comfort of my home community as one of the first graduating classes from Vezina Secondary School.

When I left my northern home to start a writing career in 1998, I had enough talent to write at a decent level in English and quickly improved with the help of my friend Mike, a seasoned journalist and copywriter. However, I still struggled with my self-esteem and shyness expressing myself in English. It took me many years of trial and error, practice and confidence building before I could comfortably participate in an English conversation.

For the longest time, I continued to speak Cree inside my mind, translate

ideas and then speak the words in English. After many years, I find the process has changed. Now that the language has taken over my thoughts, I think and speak in English more fluently while my ability in Cree is falling further away. I speak, read, write and use the English language so often that I am losing my ability to speak Cree. I don't have as many people around me who speak Cree and when I converse in my original language, I find that I struggle to find the words or phrases that were once so familiar. I am also losing some of my Cree vocabulary and I have to think hard to remember the words to describe what I am thinking or trying to say.

I still have a strong grasp of my original Cree language and that is proven in the fact that I can still joke and make silly remarks in Cree with my Native friends and relations and make them laugh. In Cree, a simple mispronunciation, a subtle change or a tiny addition to a word is enough to make people laugh at what you are saying. I think that is the one part of the language that I could never translate – Cree humour. It is the part of my language that I love the most. For instance, I once met an Elder, Lindy Loutit, a king of Cree jesters, who had red socks on his feet as he greeted me at his door. My cousin Ron and I commented in Cree that he was wearing red socks. It doesn't sound at all that humorous in English, but to say 'Kah Moo-koo-sha-kah-net' in Cree puts a smile on any northern Cree speaker. It is all about the visual, the intonation of the words and the tone.

As much as my mind may work in English these days, I don't think I will ever lose my ability to speak in Cree or the subtleties that allow me to joke in my mother tongue. Oo-was-a-ma-na! §

RÉCOMPENSE REWARD

Jusqu'à /
up to

40 000\$

Pour toute information pouvant contribuer à élucider le meurtre de Sindy Ruperthouse
For any information that can help solve the murder of Sindy Ruperthouse

Disparue le 23 avril 2014

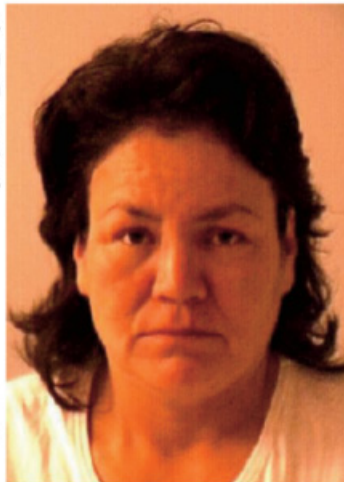
Âge: 44 ans au moment de sa disparition

Taille: 1,63 m

Poids: 59 kg

Yeux: bruns

Cheveux: noirs



Sindy Ruperthouse

Missing since April 23rd, 2014

Age: 44 yrs old when she went missing

Height: 5'4"

Weight: 131 lbs

Eye Color: Brown

Hair Color: Black



Le Service des enquêtes sur les crimes contre la personne de la Sûreté du Québec demandent l'aide de la population pour retrouver une femme d'origine autochtone de Val-d'Or. Sindy Ruperthouse a été vue pour la dernière le 23 avril 2014 à Val-d'Or.

The Investigation Service of crimes against the person of the Sûreté du Québec are asking for help from the public to find an Aboriginal woman in Val-d'Or. Sindy Ruperthouse was seen last April 23rd, 2014 in Val-d'Or.

S.V.P APPELEZ / PLEASE CALL 1-800-659-4264

Cette récompense est offerte par un donateur anonyme et expire le 22 juin 2016.

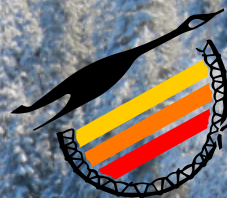
This reward is offered by an anonymous donor and expires on June 22, 2016.

Toute information fournie sera analysée et validée par les enquêteurs responsables du dossier (Sûreté du Québec).

All information received will be analysed by the police force in charge of the investigation (Sûreté du Québec).



Your Northern Airline of choice!
We offer discounted rates and seat sales.*



airCreebec

For reservations, charters or information, call toll-free: 1-800-567-6567
Or visit our website at: www.aircreebec.ca

*certain conditions apply to seat sales